

Inspection of Great Barton Pathways

School Road, Great Barton, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 2RJ

Inspection date: 20 April 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good
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What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children are happy and busy throughout their time at this welcoming setting. They develop warm bonds with staff and clearly feel safe and secure in their care. Children are eager to explore the activities on offer and talk animatedly to their friends and staff about what they are going to do next. They are kind and develop friendships, inviting others to play games of hide and seek or offering some of their play dough to a newly arrived child. Children develop a love of books and enjoy sitting with their friends to 'read' books on the sofa. They demonstrate their imaginative skills as they mix up 'magic potions' in the garden with glitter and pebbles in the water tray, telling staff that it is an invisibility potion.

Staff have high expectations for all children and use their knowledge of each individual to set appropriate goals and provide support. Children have a strong understanding of the expectations and rules of the setting. For instance, they take turns on a big trampoline and count their friend's bounces to tell when it is time to swap. They listen to staff directions and often independently follow key rules, such as the safe number of children that can play on the climbing frame at one time.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The manager is passionate about providing a high-quality service for children and families. She encourages staff to develop specialisms, such as outdoor play and art, and access training and qualifications to develop their skills. The manager recognises areas to improve further, such as developments to the peer observation process to support consistently strong practice across the setting. Recent improvements include the development of an indoor space for children to practise their energetic physical skills and an all-weather space for parents and carers outside.
- Staff know children well and use this knowledge to plan targeted activities to help children to make progress from their unique starting points. The manager and staff have a clear intent for their curriculum with a focus on the prime areas of learning. They organise a regular schedule of outings and visitors to enrich children's learning. For instance, after a visit to the local theatre, children recreate and explore this experience with a puppet theatre in the setting.
- Parents praise the warm, friendly staff team. They note how much their children enjoy attending and the range of skills and knowledge they have developed at the setting. Parents comment how much their children enjoy the outdoor play opportunities and appreciate how older children can still access the setting's wraparound care when they start school.
- Staff make good use of everyday opportunities to promote children's mathematical skills. For example, they help children to count the pieces of fruit and the number of children seated at the table. They talk about whether that is

enough for everyone to have 'one more piece each'. Staff also use children's fascination with ladybirds to talk about colours, shapes and categories. Children recall that ladybirds are insects because they have six legs.

- Children are curious and demonstrate good levels of concentration. They are fascinated by minibeasts and listen intently as staff help them to identify potential habitats and encourage them to be gentle when catching creatures in little viewing pots.
- Staff interactions with children are warm and responsive. Staff promote children's communication and language skills well. They model interesting vocabulary, answer children's questions with enthusiasm and extend conversations with genuine interest. Staff provide opportunities for children to talk about their emotions and to share how they feel during the day. They make use of a 'feelings' board with illustrated faces to help children express themselves.
- Staff use adult-led group activities to support children's learning. Children enjoy taking part in singing and recall the words and actions readily. They are keen to share their news at group time and talk about things they have done during the session or at home. However, sometimes, large-group activities are too long or have lots of people talking at once, which causes children to become distracted or disengaged.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The manager ensures staff access regular safeguarding training, with refresher training when they return from a long absence from work such as maternity leave. This helps staff to keep their knowledge up to date. Staff know the signs and symptoms that may indicate a child is at risk of harm. They understand how to identify, report and refer concerns, including any regarding the behaviour of adults that work with children. Staff also have a good awareness of child protection issues such as the 'Prevent' duty. When appointing new staff, the manager follows appropriate recruitment processes to assure herself that staff are suitable.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- strengthen the organisation of group times to maximise children's engagement and learning opportunities.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY381254
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10263438
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	3 to 11
Total number of places	26
Number of children on roll	98
Name of registered person	Great Barton Pathways Ltd
Registered person unique reference number	RP523414
Telephone number	01284 788258
Date of previous inspection	2 May 2017

Information about this early years setting

Great Barton Pathways re-registered in 2008 and is run by a voluntary committee. The setting employs seven members of childcare staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 5 and three hold qualifications at level 3. The setting is open Monday to Friday, all year round, from 8am to 5.30pm. It provides funded early education for three- and four-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Kate Oakley

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the setting received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the setting and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the setting.
- The manager took the inspector on a learning walk across all areas of the premises to explain how the early years provision and curriculum are organised.
- The inspector observed the quality of interactions during activities, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this has on children's learning.
- The manager completed a joint observation and evaluation of an activity with the inspector.
- The inspector spoke to children, staff, parents and committee members at appropriate times during the inspection. She also took account of the views of parents through written feedback provided.
- The inspector looked at a sample of the setting's documents. This included evidence regarding staff suitability and training.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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